



Search for Common Ground



2010 FINAL EVALUATION: SUPPORTING A CONVERSATION WITH YOUTH ON LEADERSHIP

In September 2008, Search for Common Ground (SFCG) signed a contract with the United States (US) Department of State's Bureau of Democracy Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) to implement an 18-month project in Cote d'Ivoire to strengthen youth capacity to mitigate conflict and promote tolerance. The project is entitled "Supporting a Conversation on Youth Leadership in Côte d'Ivoire".

The project has engaged Ivoirian youth through a conversation about leadership, delivered across a series of training and exchange workshops (24 workshops in 4 different regions across the country and 1 in Abidjan), follow-up sessions (22), supports for youth initiatives (e.g exchange sessions, theater performances), interactive theater workshops and radio programs (including the magazines *Passerelle* and *Unis dans nos differences*, and the radio soap operas *L'Equipe* and *Woro Woro Tour*).

With the purpose of enhancing the reliability of findings, the evaluation sought to triangulate data collection methods, sources of information and means of analysis. The evaluators gathered a mix of quantitative and qualitative data by using five different tools, including a document review, a theory of change workshop with SFCG staff, Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with participants to the project and beneficiaries, semi-structured individual interviews with key stakeholders and informants, and two surveys.

SFCG BUILDS YOUTH KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS IN CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

All project's activities (conversation workshops, follow-up sessions, support to peace initiatives, interactive theater and radio programs) were highly valued and appreciated by the beneficiaries. Youth



feel that they have considerably **improved their knowledge and practical skills** in conflict transformation and leadership. Gained knowledge has been **optimized by a pragmatic strategy**, guiding and supporting youth in their initiatives.

Furthermore, youth who participated in the project's activities have developed an excellent set of skills expected from youth leaders: the ability to stand for their rights as citizen, the ability to resist negative pressures (political manipulation) and the ability to relate to other young people and members of their communities. SFCG's project has provided youth with **self-transformation tools**, allowing them, in their own words, to gain maturity and to develop the critical thinking skills necessary to fight against political manipulation and violence.

SFCG IMPROVES YOUTH CONFIDENCE IN PLAYING ROLE AGAINST VIOLENCE AND POLITICAL MANIPULATION

The evaluation concludes on a **positive sense of ownership** of the project among youth leaders and an improved sense of responsibility as young citizens.

With a different set of strategies, youth have transferred their new knowledge to their peers and in their communities. These strategies included "neighborhood tours", face-to-face encounters, sensitization within youth's organizations, active participation in Listening Clubs, etc. Additionally, **Interactive theater** has demonstrated to be a powerful sensitization tool, especially in rural areas. Additionally, by applying conflict resolution techniques that they had learned in SFCG's workshops, youth have demonstrated that they had **internalized these new knowledge** and skills. Highlighting this fact,



59% of surveyed youth confirmed that they had participated in an activity with the goal of preventing or managing a conflict in the past year.

The project did not only address political violence, but also a **wide range of conflict drivers** in targeted areas. The evaluation identified many different types of conflicts for which youth strove for peaceful resolution (familial, personal, scholar, political, identity, land, leadership, social and religious conflicts). The project has thus contributed to enabling youth to actively engage in peaceful conflict prevention and resolution.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To SFCG

- In future similar projects, it may be appropriate to better clarify the selection process of the participants.
- Some tools seemed to be more effective in rural areas than in urban areas (e.g interactive theater), and *vice-versa*. Should different strategies and instruments be used for addressing youth and beneficiaries' needs in urban and rural areas? It may be appropriate to reflect on context-specific tools for urban and rural areas.
- It may improve the project's effectiveness and sustainability to build a partnership with local authorities, particularly those in charge of youth at the national, regional and local levels.
- Field experience and academic research have demonstrated that gendered identities need to be taken into account in peacebuilding programs. It would be appropriate to reflect on a gender strategy to ensure greater participation of young women and greater responsiveness to their specific needs and challenges.
- SFCG may need to define more explicitly the key terms they use in the project (e.g youth, beneficiaries, leadership, etc.)

To the donor(s)

- Given the encouraging results reached by SFCG's project, it would be recommended to extend the project's activities, not only in duration but also in regards to a larger geographic scale.

Source: This document is a summary of, and taken directly from "Final Evaluation Report: Supporting a Conversation on Youth Leadership in Cote d'Ivoire" by Clotilde Gouley and Quentin Kanyatsi. A copy of this document can be acquired at <http://www.sfcg.org/sfcg/evaluations/civ.html>, or by contacting Nick Oatley, Director Institutional Learning at Search for Common Ground at noatley@sfcg.org

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